Under the Old Elms.

By Mary B Claffin

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"Aunties Lou."

H. E. C.

Under the Old Elms

BY

MARY B. CLAFLIN

AUTHOR OF "BRAMPTON SKETCHES," "PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS OF JOHN G. WHITTIER," "REAL HAPPENINGS"

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TO HIM
WHOSE OPEN-HEARTED HOSPITALITY
AND UNSWERVING LOYALTY
TO HOME AND FRIENDS AND COUNTRY
MADE "THE OLD ELMS"
A DELIGHT TO ITS INMATES,
THESE MEMORIES
OF HAPPY DAYS SPENT THERE
ARE DEDICATED.

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UNDER THE OLD ELMS.

I.

UNDER THE OLD ELMS.

"As if to music they had grown,
Stately and fair the elms uprise,
Their swaying shadows earthward thrown,
Their tops rejoicing in the skies.
What life and death, what love and pain,
What nights of gloom and days of gold,
Have passed beneath their leafy reign!
Yet still their ancient pride they hold,
Still tower o'er roof and slope and plain,
And link the new years to the old."

For two hundred years the elms have been growing on a grassy bank in Newton, Massachusetts. Harps for the winds, they have thrilled to the breath of June, or bent in the blasts

of December. Homes for the birds, they have rocked the nests of the robin and the oriole, whose songs echo through their sylvan paradise. The lawn they shadow is broad and green, and at its farther side a low wall separates it from the village street. Through it there runs a brook with pleasant ripple and flow, crossing the field beyond to be lost in the Charles River two miles away. There grow the earliest flowers of spring, — violets, anemones, hepaticas, to be followed by buttercups and daisies, and, in their season, by clusters of golden-rod and purple asters.

The place is said to have been a part of the Newton estate of Governor Simon Bradstreet, from whom it passed eventually to the Fuller family. That the region has been long settled is

shown by the fact that the homestead near it has been in the possession of one family for two hundred years. Judge Fuller, whose farm a century ago comprised nearly the whole of what is now the village of Newtonville, cultivated the fruitful acres; and on Thanksgiving Day, when his children and grandchildren were gathered about the ancestral board, beneath the old elms, he was wont to say with satisfaction, "My dear children, I hope you realize that every article of food before you was raised on this farm."

And there was no lack of variety, with the plump turkey, the geese, ducks, and chickens, the cranberry tartlet, the popcorn, the sweet cider, the hickory nuts that grew by the brook, and the chestnuts that ripened on the hillside.

There stood on a ridge near the house a group of great chestnut-trees, so ancient and storm-beaten that probably they were bearing fruit when the Mayflower sailed into Plymouth harbor in 1620. Of the magnificent elm whose branches overspread the house, and whose trunk, because of its unusual size and fine proportions, has been reverenced by his successors for generations, he used to tell this little story to his grandchildren : —

"Before the time of carriages, I was riding to church, two miles distant, one pleasant Sunday morning ; and my horse, beginning like his master to feel the encroachments of age, was not disposed to trot. Fearing the parson would have finished his opening exercises before I should reach the corner of the great square pew where he

always looked to see me, and from which I was seldom absent, I alighted and broke from a tree by the roadside a small elm sapling, which would serve as an incentive to old Dobbin to hasten his steps. The sapling I stuck in the saddle as I hitched the horse under the meeting-house shed; and I brought it home with me. When I rode up to the door, your grandmother, my good wife, as was her custom, stood waiting for me; and I said, 'Wife, I am going to put this little sapling in the ground; it may shade our grandchildren.'"

The sapling, nine feet above the grassy knoll on which it stands, now measures eighteen feet in circumference. Many years ago a great tornado stripped it of its upper branches; but this loss gave it new life. To-day

it is as strong and vigorous and thrifty as it is picturesque and venerable.

General William Hull, who married the daughter of Judge Fuller, had served with credit in the Revolutionary War. In the War of 1812 he was made governor of Michigan, and was placed in charge of the forts at Detroit. On account of the very inadequate garrison and the insufficient equipment in every way, he felt compelled to surrender the fort to the British, for which he was tried by court-martial, and condemned to be shot; but the president, in consideration of his faithful service in the Revolutionary War, pardoned him. This surrender was made as a humanitarian act, and at the risk of forfeiting his military fame. He returned,

crestfallen and heartsore, to spend the remainder of his days at the old homestead.

General Hull was a graduate of Yale. He was a soldier for ten years, associating with Washington and his generals. His manners were a fine mingling of those of the soldier, the courtier, and the man of the world. He was a scientific and successful farmer; and when he came back to the estate he was as much at home among the farmers of Newton as he had been in other days with generals, governors, and presidents.

Mrs. Hull was a handsome woman, with the same easy manners as her husband, having associated with Mrs. Washington, Mrs. Knox, and other ladies. She had a peculiar hobby of buying at auctions; and the attic of

the house was a museum filled with the most remarkable things, from a church window to a lot of coffin-plates, as useless as the green spectacles of Moses Primrose. The house was always full from attic to cellar. She always had a band of retainers of all colors and races in and about the big kitchen. Among these was a colored man named "Othello," called Tillo for short. His father had given him when a boy to Mrs. Hull until he should become of age. When General Hull set him at liberty and gave him money to start, he went as far as Watertown and then returned to the house, considering himself one of the family, and he always remained with them.

General Hull's name was always spoken with respect and reverence by the village folk, and he was honored

all through the country-side for his gentlemanly bearing and his kindly consideration for those about him. He felt keenly the disgrace that followed his action at Detroit, and mingled little with the outside world, spending his time in cultivating the land, and introducing new and improved methods of agriculture, and in adorning the place.

Wishing to irrigate and beautify his estate, he diverted the brook from its original course as it ran from the lake above, thus diminishing the water which fed a small mill lower down the stream. This made trouble with the mill, and the mill-owner appealed to the law. General Hull took the ground that agriculture was of the first importance, and that he had a right to use the water for agricultural purposes. The court decided that he had the

right to use the water, but not to interfere with the rights of others. All had equal rights, and the grinding of the corn for the use of mankind was as much a necessity as the raising of the corn; hence the miller won his case, and General Hull was compelled to turn the brook back to its original channel. All the laws of the State concerning water-ways and mill-privileges are based upon the decision of the courts at that time.

The village grew slowly in General Hull's day. From his home under the elms to the track where the trains now run a hundred times a day, there was not a house; and when the whistle of the engine was first heard on the Boston & Albany Railroad, long after General Hull had passed away, where now stands the picturesque, vine-clad

depot and the populous village, there was only a flag-station, called Hull's Crossing. General Hull was gathered to his fathers in the year 1825; and in making some repairs in the vault where he was laid, it was found that the body of Judge Fuller, which had been buried many years, had become petrified, and was in perfect form and condition, except a slight change in color. This circumstance was a matter of great interest to the medical men and scientists of the time.

During the Revolutionary War, General Hull for a time had served under La Fayette, at Whitemarsh and Monmouth. In 1824, when the Marquis revisited this country, he came to see the General. When the two met, the Marquis, with French effusiveness, kissed General Hull, and said with

feeling, "We have both suffered much from calumny." General Hull's children and grandchildren were presented to the Marquis; and finally, with a parting embrace, the two old comrades-in-arms bade each other an affectionate and last farewell.

The old, rambling house which had stood for nearly a century under the elms, and where were preserved the horns of the deer that was shot by Judge Fuller from the doorstep of his mansion, was removed after General Hull's death to the village that was growing up at Hull's Crossing; and there it stands, a monument of the early time when it was the centre of all the activities of the town. The elderly people talk to this day of the events which occurred in the "good old

time" at the Hull mansion. Old Tillo, the colored man who always attended General Hull, insisted that ghosts wandered through the house at night, and that the festivities of the family were often disturbed by uncanny sights and sounds. Be this as it may, the old mansion was the scene of many a frolic when the children and grandchildren of the third and fourth generations gathered, and made the rafters ring with their mirth; while Tillo used his fiddle and his bow to the tune of "Money-Musk," "The Fisher's Hornpipe," and other merry strains.

The elms stood in their lonely grandeur, and the brook rippled along its way undisturbed, until the year 1855, when the estate was purchased by the present occupant, and the house erected that now stands on the very spot from

which the former was removed. But I sometimes fancy the same birds sing their morning songs (in no other trees do they sing so sweetly), the same frogs croak their evening discords, the same crickets chirp their friendly, cheerful tunes as we sit in the twilight on the doorstep, where used to sit Governor Bradstreet, Judge Fuller, General Hull, and all the goodly company that called the old mansion "home."

II.

During our occupancy of the place, we were fortunate in having such a number of interesting people, many of whom are no longer on earth, to sojourn with us under the elms, or to make brief visits there, that it has seemed to me a pleasant thing to record some of my memories of them.

Among the first to help us dedicate the new abode, came Mrs. Stowe and her brother, Henry Ward Beecher; and as we looked out on a bright morning from the doorstep, over the green lawn, they said, "The place is worthy of a name; let us christen it here and now!" Various names were sug-

gested, but none seemed exactly to fit; until Mrs. Stowe exclaimed with enthusiasm, "How magnificent the old elms are!" Mr. Beecher immediately took up the strain, and added, "We have it! the place shall be called, 'The Old Elms!'" and so it has been designated for forty years.

The Reverend James Freeman Clarke was a grandson of General Hull, and many hours of his boyhood were spent under "The Old Elms." He was familiar with every tree and shrub and rock, and knew where the orioles hung their nests, and where were the squirrels' hiding-places. Some of the happiest hours of his later life were spent in wandering over the paths of his youth, and in recalling the scenes where he and his brother had "played

soldier" under the direction of their grandfather, for whom they had great reverence. Dr. Clarke wrote an able and elaborate vindication of his grandfather, which, I think, convinced every fair-minded person of the wisdom of General Hull's course at Detroit. One of the pleasures to which we looked forward was the annual visit of Dr. Clarke. He was full of reminiscences; there was an anecdote about every nook and corner; and there, as nowhere else, he could lay aside his burdens and forget his cares, and revel in the memories of his happy childhood. There he always brought the members of his family, who lived in a distant State; and they wandered up and down the brookside where joyous hours had been spent in dropping the line for trout and pickerel, or in seeking for

birds' nests in the overhanging trees. One day there was music under the elms when Dr. Clarke drove up the avenue, and he was asked if he enjoyed music. His reply was, "I have not much interest in music. I think if I had one more interest it would have the effect of the last feather on the camel's back."

I replied, "It has always been a regret to me that I cannot sing or make music in any form."

"Neither can I," said Dr. Clarke; "let us shake hands and agree to sing a duet in heaven."

Among the wise sayings in Tupper's "Proverbial Philosophy" we find, in his opinion, that no family is complete without a grandmother and a baby. Providence supplied both to "The Old

Elms." The grandmother there was a typical old-fashioned New England woman, full of activity and abounding energy. She kept up all the old-time traditions, and told the stories of old-time life, and was the delight of the young people who frequented the house. Knitting was her favorite employment; and nothing would induce her to cast the stitches for a new stocking on Friday, or to start on a journey on that day, for good luck never attended anything that was started on Friday; and as for sitting down to a table with thirteen, she said she would sooner be drawn and quartered, for some one would surely die before the year ended should that be done. The crowing of the cock, the cackling of the hens, and the spinning of a spider's web on the grass, were signs and omens of some-

thing that was going to happen for good or ill. She told the stories of her youth with so much zest that the children preferred her room above all others, and they were never tired of hearing of the hardships and the frolics of the days about which she delighted to talk. She would tell them of riding on a pillion to a neighboring town to attend the balls, which began at five o'clock in the afternoon, and did not end until the "break o' day" the next morning. The great event of her life, which the children asked her often to repeat, was a journey which she took in her youth with her parents. They were six weeks travelling from Massachusetts to the wilderness of Rome and Utica, "in York State," where there were only native Indians dressed in blankets and feathers, with scalping-

knives, and from whom the children had to hide away. When she came back to Massachusetts she married a young physician who afterward became famous; and while he followed his profession, she lived her busy life, taking care of the farm, and entertaining the guests and patients who came from far and near to seek advice from the good doctor. She was as noted for her thrift and energy in managing affairs as he for his skill in treating his patients. Late in her life, after he had finished his earthly career, she left the home in the small New England village where she had lived all her married life, and came to dwell under the old elms. On her seventy-seventh birthday she was baptized there, and became a member of the same church where Judge Fuller and General Hull had wor-

shipped nearly a century before. She remained with us, the light and joy of the family circle at "The Old Elms," until she was ninety, when she went to join the innumerable company with whom she had walked the journey of life.

The first great shadow that fell over "The Old Elms," during our residence there, was the departure of a dear little boy, who for five years had been the delight of all who looked into his luminous eyes, and heard his bird-like voice. He had said of a little cousin whom he saw lying in his casket for burial, "That little head will have a crown on it, and those little hands will have a harp in them;" so when the angel came a few months later for him, his one thought of death was that it

would bring him a harp and a crown. His going away changed the whole current of life there, and thenceforth every storm and blast of winter, every flower and shrub and blade of grass, every zephyr and bird-song, spoke to the mother's heart of the blessed child. It was in this time of loss and loneliness that Dr. S. F. Smith, whose home was in the neighborhood, came as an angel of mercy to comfort with his tender sympathy the stricken hearts. Then began a friendship which has lasted through all the years. If any event of special interest occurred in the family, whether of joy or sorrow, some sympathetic poem of his was sure to find its way to the hearts under "The Old Elms." One morning, after a stormy night, came this sweet message: —

"I listened in the evening to the sighing of the gale,
I watched the heaping snowdrifts, and heard the rattling hail;
And I thought with grateful spirit, 'what a glorious God is ours,
So mighty in the tempest, so gentle in the flowers'!
And I saw within the darkness, in the paths that mortals tread,
In the land of grief and parting, of the mourning and the dead,
How God, with loving mercy softening the painful blow,
Leaves joy to gild our sorrow, like flowers in time of snow."

Dr. Smith's visits at "The Old Elms" were always looked forward to with pleasure by old and young, for he never came without leaving some agreeable memory. One day on looking at some beautiful flowers, a lady said, "Will there be anything in heaven more beautiful?" Quick as thought

the reply came, "There everlasting Spring abides, and never-withering flowers." His lips were always ready to give expression to the poetry which was in his heart. At a large reception one day, Dr. Smith's poetic fervor was kindled by some expression of the lady with whom he was conversing, and all at once there was a lull in the conversation, and an almost audible smile on every countenance; Dr. Smith had become oblivious of his surroundings, and had thrown himself on his knees before the lady, and was pouring forth some exquisite lines which had at that moment fired his soul.

Dr. Holmes once said of him, "I thought I was as bright as Smith when we were in college together, but Smith has gone far beyond me. Smith's 'America' is sung on every

mountain-top, in mid-ocean, and in the darkest mines; and will continue to be sung as long as our country endures. It opens or closes every patriotic festival, and is familiar in every schoolroom throughout the country. Smith's hymn is known wherever America is known. To write a hymn that is sung with enthusiasm by seventy millions of people over this broad continent, and in every land on the globe, is what I call fame."

Dear Dr. Smith! Of all those of his generation who used to tread the paths under "The Old Elms," he alone is left.

One pleasant summer's day Mr. Whittier, Mrs. Stowe, and Mrs. Bailey, wife of the editor of *The National Era*,

the paper in which "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was first published, met at "The Old Elms." Was it not a rare trio? — the three people who had more to do with the overthrow of slavery than any other three in the whole country, — Mr. Whittier, with his soul-stirring poems; and Mrs. Stowe, whose story has gone everywhere and been translated into more languages than any other book except the Bible; and Dr. Bailey, the gentlemanly and scholarly editor of *The National Era*, to whom belongs the credit of daring to publish an anti-slavery paper in the midst of a community where slavery was cherished as a divine institution, and where the highest powers of the land were legislating to uphold and extend the system that cursed our fair country. Dr. Bailey's home in Wash-

ington was the social centre of the leading progressive men from every part of the country. At his Saturday evening receptions one was sure to meet Chief Justice Chase, Charles Sumner, Henry Wilson, Joshua Giddings, and many others.

Mrs. Stowe was often one of the company; and in such a gathering there was much brilliant conversation, and many a wise plan was formed for the overthrow of slavery. Sumner often remarked that the lack of social life among the New England people in Washington was to be deplored: "For," he said, "more plans were made, and more political intrigues matured, around the dinner-tables of the Southern politicians than ever the cool-headed, hard-working, honest Northerners conceived."

Dr. Bailey's drawing-room was the only place where the leading progressive men from the North and West could meet the leaders of advanced thought in Congress. Mr. Whittier was editor of *The National Era* with Dr. Bailey, at the time "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was published.

III.

HENRY WILSON spent much time at "The Old Elms." It was the resting-place where he found congenial companionship, and where he could lay aside his harassing cares. He was a hard-working, fearless man in Congress; and the threatening attitude of his Southern antagonists made his position in Washington anything but comfortable.

Mr. Sumner and Mr. Wilson were in perfect accord in politics, and were close friends. Sometimes when they met at "The Old Elms," it was interesting to note the contrast in the two men: Sumner was always stately and

dignified, while Mr. Wilson was careless in his language in ordinary conversation. He often said, "Sumner is in agony when I rise to speak in the Senate, for fear Massachusetts will be disgraced by my bad grammar."

Mr. Sumner said, "Do you think Wilson will murder the king's English when he is in England as he does here?" But, strange to say, careless as Mr. Wilson was in every-day life, and forgetful as he was of social etiquette and requirements, he rarely made a grammatical error in his public speeches; and he commanded as much respect and attention in the Senate as any man who lifted his voice in that august assembly. He was most entertaining in conversation; and no man had a better knowledge of the political situation of the country than he. It

must be remembered that Mr. Wilson had no advantages of family, and, in his youth, none of society or education.[1] He never went to school, and he had only the light of a pine knot to read by until after he was twenty-one years of age.

His twenty-first birthday occurred on a Saturday; and the hard-fisted old man with whom he had spent most of his life, and whom he had faithfully served, told him that he could remain over Sunday in his house by paying fifty cents. Mr. Sumner had had every advantage of family and position, education and travel, and his mind was stored with knowledge on almost all subjects.

[1] Mr. Wilson might have said with Gerald Massey: "Having had to earn my own dear bread by the eternal cheapening of flesh and blood thus early, I never knew what childhood was."

The two senators met one morning at breakfast; and Mr. Wilson (having just arrived from his first and only visit to Europe), displayed some lace he had bought in Liverpool of a woman who had made the poor, unsophisticated man believe it was something very choice. In truth, it was the coarsest cotton lace that could be made.

Naturally, after this display, the conversation at the morning meal fell upon lace; and Mr. Sumner discoursed for an hour on the different qualities of lace, — where the finest might be found, where the choicest bits of old altar-lace were preserved, what kind of lace Lady So-and-So wore when he dined with her at Lord Palmerston's, and what was the quality of Madame Thiers's lace when he dined with the president of the French Re-

public. Mr. Wilson's lace disappeared from sight, and never again came to notice.

Mr. Sumner's great versatility was shown in his conversation one evening at "The Old Elms," when he met there a club of gentlemen who had come together for the purpose of discussing the merits of Jersey cattle, the best breeds to import, etc. I was appalled when he arrived unexpectedly; for I thought surely he could not know about cattle, or have any interest in the purposes for which the club had come together. What was my surprise to find that he was conversant with all the breeds of cattle in Europe, that he knew about the methods of raising and treating them, and which were considered the most profitable for importation, and much concerning the different

brands of cheese and of butter. He entertained the club the whole evening.

Some of the gentlemen were politically opposed to Mr. Sumner; but at the close of the evening they were all ready to vote for him for President of the United States. I remember a delightful visit from Mr. Sumner, when he spent most of the time describing President Thiers's manner of entertaining his guests. He told every smallest detail, — the arrangement of the table; who were the guests; how they were seated; how Madame Thiers conversed, and how courteous her husband's manner was toward her; and how the President at the close of the dinner gathered his guests around him as he sat upon the sofa in the salon, and rehearsed the speech he was to make the next day in the French Assembly. "Thus," said

Mr. Sumner, "taking advantage of any suggestion or criticism that might be made before he gave the speech to the public."

Mr. Sumner remarked one morning, when he was full of reminiscences, "I can never forget how very courteous and cordial Lord Palmerston was to me personally, and how extremely cold and unresponsive he was to my subject. I called on him (it was at the beginning of the war) for the purpose of explaining our position in the United States, and the attitude of the North toward the South. He listened coldly, and my remarks were entirely unavailing. It was with him as with most English statesmen, though there were a few noble exceptions — Cobden was a firm friend of the North, as was John Bright, all through our contest with the South.

A friend on his return from England gave us an account of his interview with Cobden. He said, "I called one morning and asked Mr. Cobden if he were sufficiently interested in the affairs of our country to give me a little time. Cobden replied, 'Interested, Sir! My God, I cannot sleep at night for interest!'"

Mr. Sumner believed that unity and good-will among fellow-citizens could only be assured through oblivion of past differences; and to this end he introduced the following resolutions in Congress: —

Be it enacted, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress assembled: —

That the names of battles with fellow-citizens shall not be contained in the Army Registers or placed on the regimental colors of the United States.

For his action in this regard he was severely criticised, and received a vote of censure from the Legislature of Massachusetts. I well remember, in an after-visit, his great distress, as he paced the room, turning back his massive locks and wiping the perspiration from his brow, saying, "Have you any reason to think Massachusetts will ever rescind that vote?" News that the Legislature had decided to blot out the obnoxious vote which had caused him and his friends so much pain, came to him just before his death. He had exclaimed in his agony, "When I am dead justice will not be denied me." It was a matter of gratitude to his friends that he had the satisfaction of knowing justice was done to him by his beloved State while he yet lived. His terrible physical

suffering after the brutal attack of Brooks in the Senate Chamber did not equal his mental torture when the vote of censure was passed upon him by the Massachusetts legislature. This was the bitterest trial of his political life.

Mr. Wilson had given his whole thought and energy to the condition of the country, and, first of all, to the overthrow of slavery; and when he became an invalid (he was stricken with paralysis soon after the close of the war), his habits of life were so fixed and had taken such strong hold upon him that it was beyond the power of those who sought to amuse him to interest him in a game or a story. He could not find diversion except in his chosen line, and his physicians advised him to put aside all work. He wished

to try every school of medicine, and not a quack advertisement escaped his notice. Going one day to a person who had advertised to cure every disease that flesh is heir to, he came back to the family greatly amused, saying, —

"My new doctor said, 'There was a man in to see me yesterday who told me you was of some consequence, and I must cure you; now I want to know who you be, and where you put up. You ought to have very nourishing provender.' I told the doctor I had been stopping with Governor Claflin. 'Well, now,' said he, 'I want to know if you get enough to eat there. You must have good, wholesome food, and enough of it. I've been to them big houses where I couldn't get half enough to eat; they put on little messes, and not enough of anything

to satisfy a man. Such kind of living, I tell you, won't answer for you.'"

On Mr. Wilson's return from the doctor's that day we were reminded of Pope's definition of fame:—

> "What's fame?
> A fancied life in others' breath,
> A thing beyond us e'en before our death."

This "doctor" experimented for a while to no purpose, and Mr. Wilson looked for the next quack, often taking the nostrums of three or four at a time.

During Mr. Wilson's illness a great number of letters were received from every part of the country, showing the high esteem in which he was held by people of every shade of politics, and by men of the South whom he had bitterly opposed in the Senate;

even by those who had threatened his life. When he was stricken, and felt that he was face to face with death, almost his first coherent remark was, "I have no ill-will against any man, and I don't know that any one has any ill-will toward me." As he rallied from the first attack, the unrest which usually follows in such cases took possession of him, and it was touching then to see Mr. Sumner's tender interest in him. He wrote repeatedly from the Senate Chamber to the friends at "The Old Elms," — "Take good care of Wilson. Watch him, and do not let him expose himself." But the friends who would gladly have served him found themselves helpless. It was difficult to keep him from the hands of charlatans and quacks, and it was pathetic to see him wandering

from place to place in search of rest. When Mr. Sumner was seized with his last illness, Mr. Wilson started for Washington as soon as he heard the news. Entirely unfit for such a journey, his friends were obliged to take him, almost by force, back to his home.

Henry Wilson sleeps in the quiet burial ground at Natick; but his works do follow him.

Mr. Whittier's noble tribute to him is so just and true that I cannot forbear quoting some of its stanzas:—

"The lowliest born of all the land,
He wrung from Fate's reluctant hand
The gifts which happier boyhood claims;
And, tasting on a thankless soil
The bitter bread of unpaid toil,
He fed his soul with noble aims.

By the low hearth-fire's fitful blaze
He read of old heroic days,
The sage's thought, the patriot's speech:

Unhelped, alone, himself he taught;
His school, the craft at which he wrought,
  His lore, the book within his reach.

He felt his country's need; he knew
The work her children had to do;
  And when, at last, he heard the call
In her behalf to serve and dare,
Beside his senatorial chair
  He stood the unquestioned peer of all.

. . . . .

How wise, how brave he was, how well
He bore himself, let history tell.
  While waves our flag o'er land and sea
No black thread in its warp or weft!
He found dissevered states; he left
  A grateful nation strong and free!"

IV.

Mrs. Stowe and Mr. Whittier were congenial spirits, and their favorite amusement when they chanced to be together at "The Old Elms" was telling ghost stories. The members of the family, and whatever other guests were present, were ready to throw aside every occupation and pastime to listen to their marvellous tales of ghosts and goblins. Those days will live in the memory of all who were fortunate enough to hear from their lips stories of rappings and ghostly visitations, and of music from the spirit land. Mr. Whittier would smite his knee, as was his custom when anything pleased him,

and Mrs. Stowe's merry laugh would echo through the house. They would sit up till the small hours of the morning, and until the lights burned blue, to rehearse the most unlikely tales, as if they believed them all.

Henry Ward Beecher often met his sister, Mrs. Stowe, at "The Old Elms;" and many a battle they fought on the croquet ground in the shade of the trees. They would play in a pouring rain, and when the darkness of night overtook them so that lanterns were necessary to enable them to see the wickets and the balls; often becoming so absorbed in their game that they were unmindful of everything around them. On one occasion an old friend of their father's called, and expressed a great desire to see the children of his revered friend, Dr. Lyman Beecher.

A message was sent to the field of contest, informing them that their father's friend desired to see them. They paid no attention to the call; and soon a second message was sent, begging them to throw aside their mallets and come in. Meanwhile, the hostess talked against time, trying to divert the aged visitor as best she could, until a third request was sent, with like result; when the gentleman reluctantly rose, saying his train would be soon due, and he should be obliged to take his leave. Soon after he left, the two culprits came slowly up the path to the piazza, wiping their faces, and arguing briskly about the position of the balls; each contending vigorously that he or she would have obtained the victory if the other had not hit the ball so-and-so.

An older sister of Mrs. Stowe's, who

was sitting with the family on the piazza, and who was more practical, and less inclined to lose herself in croquet and billiards, remarked as Mrs. Stowe approached, "Sister Hattie, I am ashamed of you; I never was so provoked with you in my life." In the meekest possible tone, Mrs. Stowe said, "Why, Sister Mary, what have I done?" Sister Mary's eyes snapped when she said, "You have insulted our father's old friend and Mrs. C.; and we have sat in tortures, racking our brains to cover up your rudeness and brother Henry's; and finally the old man departed, grieved and injured with the conduct of the revered Dr. Beecher's recreant offspring."

"I am so sorry, sister Mary; I would not for the world injure anybody's feelings; do you really think

pa's friend felt aggrieved ?" "Brother Henry" hid himself behind a newspaper, leaving Mrs. Stowe to fight out the battle, and soothed sister Mary's feelings, by reminding her that she looked very handsome when she was mad.

Mrs. Stowe had the power of withdrawing from everything except the one thing on her mind which wholly engrossed her for the time being. She could not be diverted from the idea that had taken possession of her. Her spirit seemed to leave the body in a most remarkable way. I have known her to wander from room to room, humming softly to herself, seeming unconscious of everything about her, as if she were in a trance; and then, as though she had been communing with some spirit from another sphere, she would burst into eloquent language, a

divine rhapsody, and entrance those around her with what she had seen and heard. She lived apparently more in the upper air than in a world of action; and she always said, "I did not write 'Uncle Tom's Cabin;' I was only the instrument through which it was given to the world."

Her conversations with her brother at the hour of morning devotions were inspiring beyond any thing I have ever listened to. On one occasion, when she was soaring in the clouds, she all at once burst into an ecstasy and said, "When I laid my head upon my pillow last night, one thought took possession of me, and I could not close my eyes through the long night watches. It was this, 'Jesus Christ has lived and died, and what is all the world beside?'" And then,

as if inspired, she talked of heavenly sights and sounds.

Mrs. Stowe had an enthusiastic love for flowers, and a marvellous gift for reproducing them. When she was visiting "The Old Elms" she ran out one morning regardless of the pouring rain, and gathered a large bunch of nasturtiums, which she put so deftly upon canvas that we hold the picture as one of our choicest treasures. She loved the birds and the animals about the place; and on one occasion when she was coming to visit me, she wrote that she wished me to be prepared to receive a cat which she should bring with her. She was on her way from Concord; and she said the cat had been educated in Concord, and that it had Emersonian tendencies, and she hoped, therefore, that it

would be hospitably received and entertained.

The clergymen of the neighborhood were accustomed to meet in the bowling-alley, and the excitement often ran high between the Wesleyans on the one side and the Calvinists on the other. There was, however, no distinction of persons or creeds at "The Old Elms," and the balls rolled as impartially for the Calvinists as they did for the Wesleyans.

On an occasion when Henry Ward Beecher was visiting "The Old Elms," I thought, it would be a pleasant surprise to the distinguished preacher if I invited some of the clergy in our neighborhood to meet him; but it proved to be an inauspicious time. The preachers came, but the lion of

the evening was not disposed to roar. He retired to the library, where some of the bolder clergy followed him, one of whom ventured to ask him what was his method of preparing his sermons. Mr. Beecher's reply almost upset the poor country divine, who spent much of the week on his sermons, and was quite used up by Saturday night, as he said, "I prepare my morning sermon Sunday morning after breakfast, and my evening sermon after dinner."

One of the clergy, somewhat at a loss for conversation, broke out suddenly with this question, which would have been proper enough in the privacy of his own study, "Brother, what is the state of religion in your church?" The "brother" was indisposed to discuss the state of religion in his church then and there, and

at once turned the conversation to flowers and trees, in which he always delighted.

Mr. Beecher, the most genial and sympathetic of men, had moods in which he was withdrawn from all about him, and as inaccessible as an unscaled mountain peak. Unfortunate, then, were those who through ignorance or daring presumed to intrude upon him.

V.

MRS. STOWE loved "The Old Elms;" and when Messrs. Houghton and Mifflin, her publishers, proposed celebrating her seventieth birthday, she thought it would be pleasant to have the *fête* on the lawn there. Accordingly on the 12th of June, 1882, a goodly company assembled to honor the modest woman, who had become famous among all English-speaking people on both sides of the Atlantic. A large tent was spread on the lawn under the elms, and never did a more notable company gather together. Every one who had written a book or sung a song came to do her homage. The sun

never shone more brightly, the birds piped their sweetest notes, and the old elms swayed and nodded in the gentle breeze, as if to do their part in honoring her.

This was the neighborhood of the scenes described in "Old-Town Folks;" and the elms under whose shade the gathering was held might have whispered much about the quaint contemporaries of Sam Lawson, could they have told what had passed beneath them.

The place of Mrs. Stowe in American letters was significantly indicated in the poems offered and the speeches made during these birthday exercises. The distinction of having given that powerful book, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," to the world was never more charmingly emphasized than on that memorable after-

noon. A ray of sunlight that came in through an opening in the tent illumined dear Mr. Whittier's face as he sat on the platform, and the people waited breathlessly to hear what he had to say, when all at once he stole silently out and left another to read his exquisite poem: —

"Thrice welcome from the land of flowers
And golden-fruited orange bowers
To this sweet, green-turfed June of ours!
To her, who in our evil time
Dragged into light the nation's crime,
With strength beyond the strength of men,
And, mightier than their sword, her pen;
To her who world-wide entrance gave
To the log cabin of the slave,
Made all his wrongs and sorrows known,
And all earth's languages his own! —
Welcome from each and all to her
Whose Wooing of the Minister
Revealed the warm heart of the man
Beneath the creed-bound Puritan,
And taught the kinship of the love
Of man below and God above.

To her, whose vigorous pencil strokes
Sketched into life her Oldtown Folks;
Whose fireside stories, grave or gay,
In quaint Sam Lawson's vagrant way,
With old New England's flavor rife,
Waifs from her rude idyllic life,
Are racy as the legends old
By Chaucer or Boccaccio told.

. . . . .

Ah! dearer than the praise that stirs
The air to-day, our love is hers!
She needs no guarantee of fame
Whose own is linked with Freedom's name.
Long ages after ours shall keep
Her memory living while we sleep;
The waves that wash our gray coast lines,
The winds that rock the Southern pines,
Shall sing of her; the unending years
Shall tell her tale in unborn ears.
And when, with sins and follies past,
Are numbered color-hate and caste,
White, black, and red shall own as one,
The noblest work by woman done."

And then came Dr. Holmes, who was greeted with a storm of applause, his face beaming with inimitable humor, in perfect contrast with the calm, sober

face of Mr. Whittier. His poem was full of witty allusions.

If every tongue that speaks her praise
For whom I shape my tinkling phrase
  Were summoned to the table,
The vocal chorus that would meet
Of mingling accents harsh or sweet
From every land and tribe would beat
  The polyglots of Babel.

. . . . .

Know her! Who knows not Uncle Tom
And her he learned his gospel from
  Has never heard of Moses;
Full well the brave black hand we know
That gave to freedom's grasp the hoe
That killed the weed that used to grow
  Among the Southern roses.

. . . . .

Sister, the holy maid does well
Who counts her beads in convent cell,
  Where pale devotion lingers;
But she who serves the sufferer's needs,
Whose prayers are spelt in loving deeds,
May trust the Lord will count her beads
  As well as human fingers.

When Truth herself was Slavery's slave,
Thy hand the prisoned suppliant gave
  The rainbow wings of fiction,

And Truth, who soared, descends to-day
Bearing an angel's wreath away,
Its lilies at thy feet to lay
With heaven's own benediction.

To close the festivities Mrs. Stowe came forward, the company rising and remaining standing in her honor, and applauding her most heartily. The sweet, gentle face, crowned with its locks of silver, the slightly bowed form trembling with the joy and emotion of this supreme moment, the group of expectant, loving faces around and about her, made a sight never to be forgotten. Mrs. Stowe closed her little speech by telling a story of an old colored man whom she knew at the South, who "owned an orange grove and a house, and heads of cattle and heads of horses, and heads of hens, and ten head of children," as he expressed

it; and "they are all his own," said Mrs. Stowe, in her enthusiastic way.

The whole company joined in Elizabeth Stuart Phelps's wish for Mrs. Stowe: —

"Oh, wait to make her blessed, happy world,
To which she looketh onward ardently;
Lie distant, distant far, ye streets of gold,
Where up and down light-hearted spirits walk
And wonder that they stay so long away;
Be patient for her coming from our skies
Who will love Heaven better keeping her,
This only ask we: when from power to praise
She moves and when from peace to joy, be hers
To know she hath the life eternal, since
Her own heart's dearest wish did meet her there!"

The band discoursed sweet music; Mrs. Humphrey Allen's voice mingled with the bird-songs; and the perfect day ended in a glorious sunset.

It was truly an interesting spectacle to see standing about in groups under the elms, Whittier, Dr. Holmes, Mr.

and Mrs. E. P. Whipple, T. B. Aldrich, Louise Chandler Moulton, Dr. Lyman Abbott, Mr. and Mrs. James T. Fields, A. Bronson Alcott, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, Lucy Larcom, Henry Ward Beecher, Edward Beecher, Dr. Stowe, and dear Mrs. Stowe, the person in all the distinguished company most unconscious of fame and modest in her bearing.

On the evening before the *fête* a large barge filled with pretty girls from Wellesley College drove up the avenue, and alighted under the window where Mrs. Stowe was sitting, and burst into sweet and heartfelt song, so that all the acres echoed with their music.

The only unfavorable criticism concerning Mrs. Stowe's *fête* was from the pen of Henry Ward Beecher, her

brother. He wrote: "Mrs. Stowe s celebration was very good; but one marked exception is to be regretted. Not a colored man or woman was there! Were none invited? . . . Would it not have been worthy of the occasion if the Jubilee Singers could have been present, who were born in slavery, but who turned musical notes into bricks, and built one of the noblest colleges in the land — Fiske University, a castle built in the air and of the air!"

Not long after the *fête* the Jubilee Singers came to "The Old Elms," and entertained us with their songs and dances; they came with beaming faces and merry voices. When the singers left the house I expressed the hope that they had enjoyed the afternoon as much as I had. One tall, very black man, with his mouth stretched from ear

to ear, and his white teeth shining almost across the lawn, replied, "Well, I reckon I could beat ye on that."

To look upon the company of well-dressed, intelligent men and women, who had been a few months before regarded as chattels, bought and sold, with no right to husband or wife or children, or even to their own soul, — to see them contented and happy, to listen to their pleasant voices and watch their graceful rhythmic motions, as they danced upon the lawn; all this filled our hearts with joy, and made us realize that the long, dreadful months we had passed through during the war, when every home was turned into a hospital or a packing-house for the soldiers, had not been in vain. The hall at "The Old Elms" was never without

boxes or barrels waiting to be filled with dainties for the soldiers ; with jellies, sweetmeats, under-clothing, fans, books, anything and everything that could be thought of for their comfort. No man or woman or child crossed the threshold without being reminded, that there was room for more in the waiting boxes, in those days when every house was a house of mourning, or of anxious expectancy about some absent member.

VI.

CHIEF JUSTICE CHASE was one of the most charming visitors at "The Old Elms." He was full of interest in everything that pertained to the welfare of the country, and he talked with enthusiastic knowledge upon every question that was before the people; yet he was always ready to join in the sports of the young people, at the bowling-alley, or on the croquet ground. He was a man of magnificent proportions, tall, and elegant in his bearing. When he was visiting us at one time, we invited Governor Bullock, who was then the executive of the State, to dine with him. As I

offered my escort to the chief justice to go to the dining-room, taking it for granted that the chief justice of the United States was a more important personage than a governor of a State, he whispered in my ear, "You have made a mistake; the governor is always sovereign in his own State; you should have escorted him to the dining-room."

Of course I was grateful to my distinguished guest, and chagrined at my own ignorance. The order of seating people at the dinner-table is a matter of great importance, I learned, among titled and official people. I once knew a senator in Washington who declined to go to the table because he was not given just the place he fancied his position entitled him to; and another, who took the seat allotted him, but

would not speak through the entire dinner.

Mrs. Charles Francis Adams, whose husband represented us at the Court of St. James at a critical time during the war, when we were severely criticised and snubbed, said to me, after her return from London, "I never took a step, I never entered a room, without inquiring of some one who knew the etiquette of court circles; for I wished my country should not be disgraced by any mistake of mine." Mrs. Adams was "to the manner born;" she had had every advantage of wealth and culture, of education and travel, and knew the importance of proper attention to form and ceremony in official circles.

John Bright was held in such high estimation by all patriots in our coun-

try who were laboring for the abolition of slavery, and was so in accord with us at the North during our struggles for emancipation, often expressing a wish to meet the leaders in the conflict, especially our beloved Whittier, that we wished in every possible way to show our appreciation of his sympathy, and of his actual services in our behalf in England, where we had little affinity or even recognition. John Bright himself could not be persuaded to cross the ocean, greatly as he desired to see our country of hope and promise; but his eldest son (now a member of Parliament) came in his stead, and we were glad to do him honor for his father's sake.

He accepted our invitation to visit "The Old Elms," and a right merry time we had of it. It so happened

there were a number of young ladies at the house; and young Bright, being on pleasure intent, and not at all weighted with the responsibilities of state which oppressed his noble father, cared little whether the slaves were free or not, if only he could have a "jolly" time.

He was a typical Englishman, handsome, gay, and full of robust health. The house rang with the merriment of the young people, and the days were not long enough for their frolics. When night came they resorted to the bowling-alley, and played "skittles," as young Bright called the bowling, until eleven o'clock; then on our putting out the lights and dismissing the boys (having mercy on the little fellows who had patiently set up the pins for three hours), he said, "I am

having an awfully jolly time; could we not have another round? I hope you do not retire early."

Being plain country folk, and accustomed to sleep before the midnight hour, we were obliged to disappoint our guest; but it was well into the small hours of the morning before he went to his room. His visit has been a pleasant memory, and the young ladies at least will not forget it. He left us to make a tour through the country, but several times returned and amazed us with accounts of his adventures in the New World.

The Rev. Newman Hall, of London, spent his first night in America under the elms. He was at a loss to know, when he retired for the night, if he could be sure of safety in a country

where there was no king or queen. He affected great ignorance of our customs in this new and benighted republic, and doubtless many of our ways were new and strange to him; but I never felt quite sure that he was really as ignorant as he pretended to be when he asked if the watermelons we offered him "grew on trees," and begged to be informed "where the heat in the rooms came from," asking that he might be taken to the cellar to see the source of the heat.

He was more ignorant of our laws and customs than I should suppose it possible for any intelligent man to be who understood our language. He could not comprehend our system of public schools. It was difficult to make him understand where the working people lived. "Surely," he said,

"people who work at day labor cannot live in the comfortable cottages we are passing as we drive." The Rev. Newman Hall spent some time at "The Old Elms," but he did not readily adapt himself to the customs of New England people.

Principal Fairbain, of Mansfield College, Oxford, England, and Professor Henry Drummond, of world-wide fame, were among the guests who gave great pleasure to the dwellers under the elms. They were full of interest in the work which they came to accomplish, and the pleasant impression they left behind them when they returned to their own country will never be forgotten. They are held in grateful remembrance by all who had the pleasure of meeting them.

I shall never forget the beautiful picture that Principal Fairbain made on the lawn under the elms with a company of little girls grouped about him,—he, with his fascinating Scotch brogue and his typical Scotch face, talking to the girls who met there weekly to learn sewing, and to talk about good manners, and what best to do with their lives, and how they could make themselves useful, and how they might help others less favored than they were. Many of the children were of Scotch parentage, and they stood with wide-open eyes and ears to catch every word. It was interesting to listen to this wise, kindly man as he tried to adapt his language to the little children.

One day we drove from "The Old Elms" to Concord that he might see the homes of Emerson, Alcott, and

Hawthorne and the quiet hillside of their last repose. It was most pleasant to take him to places of interest, and to show him anything peculiarly American, because of his quick interest and cordial courtesy and ready comprehension of our life. There seems to be a community of feeling between Americans and Scotchmen that is lacking many times with the English: this was eminently true of Principal Fairbain, who seemed to enjoy every phase of American life.

He was not disposed to criticise and carp at what he saw in our country of achievement and promise; and he did not in the least agree with the distinguished Englishman who visited us not long since, and pronounced America a very uninteresting place.

Professor Drummond captivated all hearts; and his words led us to realize more than ever the beauty of this life, and the glories of the next, of which many who heard him said he gave them a foretaste. He taught those who listened to him to follow that One Teacher, who among all philosophers of the world's history has associated learning with character, charity, peace, love, eternity — who said, "Learn of Me, and ye shall find rest to your souls." He said, "If I held truth captive in my hand, I should open my hand and let it fly away in order that I might again pursue and capture it."

Professor Drummond's delicate spiritual face expressed his humane, lofty thoughts. It was a pleasure to look upon him as well as to listen to him.

VII.

In the year 1877 a move was made to sell the Old South Meeting House, which stands at the head of Milk Street. There was a great uprising among the people, who wished to save it as a monument of the old time where so much relating to Revolutionary days had been enacted. Miss Susan Hale personated Madam Norton, who gave the land upon which the old church stands; and for the purpose of raising money to swell the fund for the purchase of the church, she held a reception at "The Old Elms." The invitation is shown in *fac simile* (reduced) on the following page: —

Madam Mary Norton

Has returned to Boſton, after long Abſence, to make Inquiry regarding the Garden which ſhe gave for the Building of the

Old South Meeting-Houſe.

Madam Norton has received from divers Pens, Verſes and other Writings inſtructing her in the Hiſtory of the Meeting-Houſe, in the Years ſince ſhe left Boſton.

She hopes for the honor of your Company at the Reſidence of the

Hon. WILLIAM CLAFLIN, Newtonville,

to hear theſe Writings read, on

Saturday Afternoon, October Sixth, Eighteen Hundred and Seventy-ſeven,

at 4.00 o'clock, precisely.

Theſe writings are by

James Freeman Clarke,
William Everett,
James T. Fields,
Edward Everett Hale,
Oliver Wendell Holmes,
Rev. S. F. Smith, D.D.
Samuel M. Quincy, and others,

and Madam Norton hopes that theſe Friends will, themſelves, honor her by reading what they have written.

Mr. I. F. Kingſbury, Mrs. A. J. Rogers, Mrs. M. A. Cole, and Mr. J. W. Davis, have, at Madam Norton's requeſt, kindly conſented to ſing, and Mrs. J. A. Waldo to play.

Original Ballads are expected from Mr. Longfellow, and Mr. Whittier.

Many gathered to hear what Madam Norton had to say; and here, as at many other places where she held forth, a considerable sum of money was raised to supplement Mrs. Mary Hemenway's munificent gift for the purchase of the meeting-house which had stood in the centre of Boston for more than a century.

Mrs. Hemenway desired that this meeting-house around which clustered so many memories of other days, and which had been the scene of all those great uprisings which ended in our independence, should be left as an object lesson of inspiration and patriotism to the younger generation. The meeting-house, which was crowned the "Sanctuary of Freedom," through these patriotic gifts was saved to Boston; and Mrs. Hemenway, one of the most remark-

able women of this century, had the satisfaction of seeing her work accomplished.

She originated and carried out many plans for the advancement of the young people of our time, for their instruction in patriotism, and for inspiring them with a love of country. By keeping before them constantly through lectures and lessons at what cost our liberties were bought, by providing means to improve their physical condition, and by arousing in the people a desire to know something of pre-historic America through archæological researches, she conferred a priceless boon on the rising generation.

By her own efforts, and at her own expense, she unearthed a city in Arizona, two miles in extent, which is said by archæologists to have been buried

thousands of years. She took from the buried city numberless treasures, which were pronounced by a congress of scientists in Berlin to be of the greatest value, proving our continent to be "not the New World," but perhaps the most ancient. Who else has done what Mrs. Hemenway has done, and to whom do we owe so much?

She sometimes drove from her country place in Milton, and sat on the piazza under the shade of the elms; and that she may have conceived there some of her wonderful schemes for the good of the world, and especially of our own country, renders all the sweeter the rustle of the leaves and the murmuring of the brook, to which she listened. Her kindly bearing, her noble response to everything proposed for the benefit of humanity, her hopeful atti-

tude towards the world, made her presence and spirit never to be forgotten.

Dr. Kirk, the eloquent preacher of Boston, came often to "The Old Elms" for rest and refreshment, and he always gave more than he took away. His conversation was most inspiring and instructive. He was proficient in all the graces and elegances of life; and in his day no one excelled him in pulpit eloquence, or in those conversational gifts that made him sought by the best society.

Père Hyacinth, when he was in this country, was invited to meet Dr. Kirk; and several gentlemen, all of whom were supposed to be familiar with the French language, came to dine with the distinguished foreigner at my table. Each gentleman in turn tried to enter into conversation with Père

Hyacinth, who could not speak or understand one word of English.

Dr. Kirk was the only person whose French was available for conversation, for the pronunciation of the other gentlemen was not what the accomplished stranger had been accustomed to. One of the guests, in his great desire to converse with Père Hyacinth, said, "I will try Latin." But, alas! his Latin was pronounced in accordance with the English system, and Père Hyacinth's with the Continental; and that attempt also failed. It may be imagined the dinner was not a great social success. Conversation dragged and grated like the keel of a boat upon a sand-bar in a river at low tide. But for Dr. Kirk's tact and perfect French, silence would have settled down upon the whole company.

During Dr. Kirk's last years he was deprived of sight. His life had been spent in study, and his love of all beautiful things in nature had filled his lonely life (he was without wife or child); but at the last, when earthly objects were fading from his sight, he found perfect peace and comfort in his visions of the heavenly city, which were so real that he often said, "I do not care to see earthly scenes, for it would, I fear, interrupt my views of the celestial country." And so he went away; and "The Old Elms" mourned the loss of one who had loved its flowers and shaded paths, and made the home there dearer for his presence.

Mr. Henry F. Durant, that rare man of consecrated genius and shrewd common sense, was a close friend of Dr.

Kirk; and together those two devoted men often met at "The Old Elms" to consider how best Mr. Durant could use his large fortune to promote and advance the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ on earth. Mr. Durant had a beautiful boy, his only child, for whom he was preparing and adorning a fine estate, upon which he intended to build a family mansion. He was in the midst of life, being yet not forty years of age, and in the height of his fame, when his boy was attacked with that fell disease, diphtheria, and in one week was removed from his earthly sight forever.

This crushing blow changed the whole current of his life; during that week his hair turned white as snow; he gave up the profession of law in which he had become renowned, and resolved that henceforth his life and his fortune

should be consecrated to God. For five years he labored and studied, going up and down through the country, consulting wise men and prominent educators as to the best way of using his fortune for the greatest good of mankind.

At length, led as he fully believed by the Divine Spirit, he decided that to found an institution for the broadest Christian education of women was the wisest thing he could do; hence he built and equipped Wellesley College, which stands to-day as a noble monument to his memory, though he forbade the use of his name in connection with it, saying always, "It is God's college, not mine."

The college hall stands in the midst of the beautiful trees he had planted, and on the borders of the lake he had prepared for the home of his boy. It

is furnished with everything that is required in the best institutions of learning, with the most approved apparatus for scientific pursuits, with a library of nearly sixty thousand choice books, and an art building with a fine collection of paintings and statuary. This noble college, the largest in the world for women, and probably the most thoroughly equipped for its purposes, has been for years one of the chief interests of the dwellers at "The Old Elms," and the friends who gather there. There Mr. Durant often came to consider and mature his plans; and there, later, came the bright young college girls from every state in the Union to make the fields and meadows resound with their merry voices, to wander through the paths under the elms, and to gather wild flowers that grew beside the brook.

Mr. Durant lived only long enough to see the college well started, and to be assured that he had made no mistake in the disposition of his fortune. The college was planned to accommodate three hundred students. It has been enlarged year after year, until now nearly a thousand are scattered through its beautiful halls and cottages. Mrs. Durant has devoted her life to the interests of the college, and as far as possible has carried out her husband's wishes.

Ex-President and Mrs. Hayes were among the friends who were most welcome at the "Elms." President Hayes, with his quiet dignity and reserve, when questioned, related his army experiences with great enthusiasm. His tender interest in his sol-

diers impressed us with his warm, self-sacrificing heart. One incident of his army life is worth repeating if only as a practical lesson.

"A terrible thunder-storm," said he, "occurred on a mountain-side where my troops were bivouacked. The lightning flashed as I never saw it flash before, and my men were terrified. Soon a report was brought to me that our provision wagons were struck and scattered to the four winds, and seven of our men were lying lifeless on the ground. I said, 'I will go to them; I think we may restore them!' After working for hours upon what appeared to be their lifeless bodies, every one of them was brought to life. My repeated experiences have convinced me," said Mr. Hayes, "that persons simply stunned by lightning may almost inva-

riably be brought to consciousness by persistent effort; and I am convinced that many people have been buried alive who might have been saved if intelligent efforts had been applied to their resuscitation."

Quiet and reserved usually, he was roused to great enthusiasm and eloquence when he touched upon army life and experience. This seemed to have had far more interest for him than his presidential career.

Dr. Peter Parker, of Chinese reputation and fame, who built the first hospital in the Chinese Empire, and accomplished much in opening to the "Flowery Kingdom" the wonders of medical science, especially in the treatment of the eye, was a frequent visitor at "The Old Elms." Dr. Parker was

the first commissioner from this government to China, and his name is held in great reverence by all enlightened Chinese. He acquired the Chinese language, which few Americans in his day had done; and he had a better knowledge of Chinese manners and customs, probably, than any other of our countrymen. His long residence in China made him familiar with the country, and his conversation was most interesting and instructive.

VIII.

As I look back, what varied forms and faces seen in that loved home gleam through the mists of years! How many interesting people I recall, who at one time or another I have had the pleasure of greeting there!

Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, with her intense nature and her sympathy with the suffering and sorrowing, whose brilliant conversation captivated her listteners; General Armstrong, with his burning zeal to uplift the lowly; General Banks, in his commanding prime, the self-taught, eloquent man to whom, when, as Governor, he delivered an address at Harvard at the inauguration

of President Felton, Edward Everett said: "Harvard College has no honors to bestow upon you, sir; your presence is an honor to Harvard;" Mrs. Robert C. Winthrop, a woman with the dignity of colonial days, and whom I especially recall as she stood one afternoon upon the piazza and urged that some syringa bushes which encroached somewhat upon the huge trunk of one of the old trees might be cut down, so that its grand proportions should be at once revealed; Madam Carmen Diaz, the wife of the president of Mexico, to whom, as we passed the green-house door, the gardener presented a superb rose of a new variety just in bloom, — a rose which so suited her grace and rich Southern beauty that thenceforth we called it the Carmen Diaz rose; Miss Emily Faithful,

whose generous proportions, strong, motherly face, and sweet voice were in harmony with her humane labors; Miss Mary Carpenter, with her otherwise plain features illumined by the sympathetic soul that had enabled her to give such help to the unfortunate women of India; Miss Alice Freeman, the gifted president of Wellesley College, through whose distinguished administration the institution rose to its true place among the universities of the country; and many, many more, who came with their wisdom and enthusiasm, their cheer and mirth, to brighten the hours, and leave delightful memories.

Lucy Larcom, the gentle, genial friend, loved the shade of the elms. She did not care to mingle with the world; and always preferred some quiet

corner where she could commune with nature, where she could listen to the lowing of the cattle in the meadow and the song of the birds, where she could sit among the flowers and dream her dreams and make the verses that went home to so many hearts. She was full of gentle courtesy and kindly feeling toward everybody with whom she came in contact, and a little verse she wrote for a young girl in the family, who asked her autograph, showed the exquisite nature which could not refuse so small a request without pain. For some good reason, doubtless, she deferred writing the autograph until it was too late; the young girl passed away from earth, and to the mother came the sweet tribute: —

"She sent to ask a verse of me to keep.
I promised, but delayed; and now asleep

She lies, an ocean's aching width between
Her mother's tears and her unwaking rest,
Beneath the soft blue skies of Italy.
Alas! betwixt fulfilment and request
There rolls a wider, more mysterious sea.

Endless regret from smallest cause may grow.
Is any failure to do kindness small?

Since her I may not, thee I send my line
As a stray leaf to lay upon her grave!'

Edna Dean Proctor, with her strength and imagination, and loyalty to nature, her poetic genius and personal charm, was an ever-welcome visitor. Pleasant were the hours when she would repeat for us some inspiring poem, or picture for us some rare scene at home or abroad. Our friends delighted in her tales of travel in Russia and in the Holy Land; and Mr. Whittier used to say to her, "I do not need to undergo the fatigue of travel, for I

can see everything, when thee tells me about the countries thee has visited. I can see the rivers of Russia, and the mountains of Palestine, all before me, and it is far more pleasant to see them through thine eyes."

Dr. Joseph Campbell, a native of Tennessee, who was connected with the Asylum for the Blind in South Boston, came often to "The Old Elms" as a friend and a teacher of music. We enjoyed his congenial companionship for several years ; and then, when his health failed from overwork, he was advised by physicians to cross the ocean. His first thought when he arrived in England was to look into the condition of the blind, and to study the methods employed for their education and advancement. He found them very inad-

equate, and he set himself immediately at work to improve their condition. As the result of his untiring efforts, a Normal College was built in upper Norwood, London, for the education of the blind.

Dr. Campbell was a man of remarkable gifts. He had rare genius and consummate tact, and he succeeded at once in winning the favor of the Duke of Westminster and of Dr. Armitage, both of whom gave him moral and financial support. His experiences in Europe, as he related them at our fireside, were most interesting. Dr. Campbell told the story of refusing to take into his school a German prince who was blind. The parents of the prince, after looking all over Europe, decided that Dr. Campbell's school was the best for the education of the blind, and they

wished to place their son there; but the Doctor informed them that he should be unable to accede to their wishes, for his institution was a republican institution, conducted upon American principles, and to receive a prince with his attendants would interfere with the management of the school and family. He was urged, but to no purpose. His dignified and persistent refusal to take the prince greatly surprised the prince's friends, who had supposed it would be regarded as an important card for the school to have for a pupil one of a royal family.

When it was found that Dr. Campbell would not yield the point, the parents of the prince said, "If you will not take him as a prince, will you take him as a beggar? He must come to your school." And thus he was re-

ceived on the same footing as any waif taken from the slums of London. He remained several years in the institution.

Dr. Campbell is the only blind man who has ever ascended Mont Blanc; and when asked why he undertook the perilous journey, his answer was, "To bring my school into notice. The London *Times* does not hesitate now to speak of my school, whereas before I ascended Mont Blanc, the only blind man who had ever accomplished this, it was difficult to get any space in that or any other prominent paper in London."

A visit to Dr. Campbell's institution in upper Norwood, under the shadow of the Crystal Palace, would well repay any American; for few of our countrymen have ever accomplished more in England than this sightless man.

He went to England poor, blind, and friendless; he now counts among his friends the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Westminster, and the princesses of the royal family. He is invited to take his pupils to sing and play before the Queen; and his school is considered the best in Europe for the education of the blind.

It was an interesting day when Mr. Campbell brought from the Institution in South Boston fifty blind children to *see* "The Old Elms;" and no company of sight-seeing boys and girls ever enjoyed more in looking at the flowers and fruits of the green-houses, than did these sightless children, who, with their sensitive fingers and in spite of the "blackness of darkness," seemed to appreciate all the beauty of form and even of color, in the tiniest flower and

the most delicate fern; and measured the great elms by stretching their arms around them. They certainly enjoyed to the full all the beauty of flowers and trees, of brook and meadow — and what a merry company it was that drove down the avenue, singing as they went.

It was the custom in the early days to hold educational conventions in every county of the State to discuss methods, and to introduce new and improved plans in all the small district schools. These conventions were conducted by the Secretary of the Board of Education, appointed by the Governor, and assisted by the wise educators that comprised the Board. Professor Agassiz, Dr. Sears, and Professor Guyot, who afterward became famous in his particular line of study, — for his re-

searches in physical geography, — were all members of the Board of Education in Massachusetts.

It fell to my lot to entertain the gentlemen for a week, when the meeting was held in our neighborhood; and among the guests was Professor Agassiz, a member of the School Board, whom to know was a liberal education. With his genial presence and fascinating manner, he took every one captive; and to this far-off day his visit is remembered in our village as an honor. One little circumstance is so characteristic of him (and I wish never to forget it) that I will repeat it. There was a meeting called of ladies in Boston who were interested in promoting the best methods of education, to listen to an English gentleman who was somewhat renowned as a practical educator in his

own country. His remarks and observations were altogether from an English stand-point; and he said, among other things which sounded strange to our republican ears, "I do not understand how you conduct your public schools. How do you know that your child will not be obliged to sit by a wash-woman's child or a blacksmith's child?"

When the gentleman had finished his speech, the ladies sat breathless in dumb amazement, wondering how best to reply to such un-American sentiments. Professor Agassiz, a foreigner born, arose, and in his fascinating voice and convincing, persuasive manner, said: "The glory of our country is that we have no wash-woman's children or blacksmith's children, as such; and all we have to fear is that the wash-woman's child will go ahead of our

children, and leave them in the background."

These words were like an electric shock, coming from this European, and testifying to the grandeur of American patriotism; and the unfortunate Englishman looked wilted under this overwhelming idea of equality, while the ladies raised their heads in proud appreciation of their distinguished advocate, and were ready to embrace him.

John B. Gough, the eloquent temperance advocate, spent many days at "The Old Elms," and with his wit and humor enlivened many an hour after returning from his lectures. *Before* the lecture he was always "going to fail," and "probably would have to be dragged from the platform in disgrace." This was his invari-

able experience, though he lectured thousands of times, and always to the largest audiences. One could only endure the prelude by keeping in mind the postlude.

On one occasion we had promised to accompany him to Norfolk, where he was going to speak. The idea took possession of him that his lecture would be a total failure, that he probably should not live to get through it, or if he did not die on the platform he should disgrace all his friends. He set up a fearful impromptu cough, and walked the floor in agony, saying to his wife, who was a pattern of patience and forbearance, "I know I shall die, Mary; just listen to my cough; how can I lecture with such a cough?"

We were all appalled; for we knew great preparations had been made for

the lecture, and his condition was so much worse than usual, that we were at a loss to know what course to pursue; but by dint of perseverance and coaxing we succeeded in getting him to the platform, where he gave one of the most brilliant of lectures to a crowded audience whose enthusiasm knew no bounds. His cough disappeared, and his spirits rose to the highest pitch, and he gave up all idea of dying.

In the early days, lyceum lectures were common in the country villages, and the pleasure of entertaining the lecturers usually fell to me. When Horace Greely came, he said, "I think I ought to have as much as twenty-five dollars for coming here from New York to lecture; and if there are those who cannot afford to pay twenty-five

cents entrance fee, it would be but a friendly act for you to present them with tickets."

I well remember his peculiar impressive appearance, his massive head, blue eyes, and exquisitely fair skin, the light overcoat which he always wore, and the huge "arctics" which he would have worn to the platform if the committeeman in attendance had not suggested to him that he would be more comfortable if he removed them — so intent was he upon his theme, and so forgetful of himself. His lectures were interesting, but not brilliant. When supper was finished, and some question was asked him regarding the condition of the country, he discoursed with such wide intelligence and wisdom, told such pithy anecdotes, and indulged in such choice reminiscences, that we listened

to him as if he had been a Mentor who knew all the springs of action, and could control the whole flow of affairs.

Many strange visitors came to "The Old Elms," and among them once was a woman who addressed me thus :—

"I have come to you, madam, as one who will understand my position, and appreciate the necessity of my case. I address a lady ; I also am a lady, and fit to associate with the best in the land ; but fate has compelled me to do something for a livelihood, and I have chosen the position of lady's companion as being best adapted to my refined taste and requirements, and, though I say it who should not, perhaps I am able to fill any position ; but, of course, it is quite necessary that I should make a suitable appearance, and

I have, I must confess to you, no dress suitable for those occasions where a lady is expected to make a very dignified and graceful appearance. In short, I have no dress with a train; and you know as well as I how much more a lady is respected who has a train to her dress, especially by the foreign persuasion, that is, by the servants of a fine house, such as I am fitted to adorn. I have one dress which I think could be converted by an artistic dressmaker into a train. I feel competent myself to make a plain skirt, but I really do do not feel equal to the perfect adjustment of a train, and I have not the money to procure a skilled artist; but knowing your sympathy with all who wish to make the most and best of themselves, I felt that it would be only a pleasure to you to let me

have five dollars, which I think would enable me to do what is so desirable."

During this long harangue I had experienced nearly every emotion of which the heart is capable; but when she finished, indignation prevailed, and I exclaimed with considerable warmth, "I think you will gain much more respect by wearing a plain skirt than you will by appearing in a train which you have begged the money to procure. I must decline your request."

At this juncture my lady assumed quite a different attitude; with a very lofty air, and in most contemptuous tones she said, "I see I am much mistaken in the person I address. I thought I was addressing a Christian lady;" and, slamming the door, she disappeared.

An interesting incident occurred in connection with one of Mr. Wilson's visits at "The Old Elms." A lady from a distance presented herself to me on a hot summer's day, when the vice-president was sojourning with us, and requested an interview. So great was the heat I had declined to see visitors; but the lady urged her suit. She said she had come quite a distance in the cars, and her business was very important. Her appeal was so persistent that I could not resist; and when I entered the parlor the lady arose, begged my pardon for interrupting me, and remarked she thought the importance of her visit would justify the interview, even on such an afternoon as this. Then she introduced her subject: —

"Madam, I believe you are a friend of the vice-president?"

I replied: "Yes; the vice-president is a friend of my husband."

"You are aware, madam, that he is a man of powerful physique; he has a very broad chest, and consequently requires a great deal of air to properly expand his lungs. My mind has been greatly exercised of late about his surroundings; his own house is small, and you know, madam, his means are quite limited. The room he occupies is not large; the ceiling is low; and the air is not sufficient for a man of his lung capacity. It is very sad that he has no one to give him a welcoming smile when he returns to his home after his arduous duties; and I have, madam, quite a large place and quite a fortune in my own right. My rooms are large and airy, and much better adapted to the wants of a man in his position than

those he now occupies. My fortune is considerable now, and will be larger when my mother passes away; she is quite aged, and will not probably live long. You doubtless perceive, madam, by my conversation, that I am a lady of refinement and education, that I could adorn the high position I should take as the vice-president's wife; and I have come to you feeling sure that you would appreciate my feeling, and would make known to the vice-president your impression of me and of my ability to grace any position. If I say it who should not, perhaps, I suppose there are few ladies in the country better fitted to adorn the position which I should take as his wife than I am."

After a somewhat prolonged visit the lady bowed herself out. I was left to

meditate upon the strange experiences of life.

A company of the most warlike Indian chiefs from the far West was brought by the Indian Commissioner, appointed by the Government, to Boston. In compliance with the request of Sitting Bull, Thunder Cloud, Red Jacket, and many more, who wished to see how the "chief" in Massachusetts lived, they were driven out to "The Old Elms," accompanied by their interpreter and the dignified commissioners. They were all dressed in their blankets and feathers and beads and wampum. As they drove up the avenue in fine barouches, and with prancing horses, they presented a very unusual and picturesque appearance; but never by word or look did they betray the fact that

they had not been accustomed to riding in barouches up long avenues of elms all their lives ; and when they were presented to the hostess, a solemn nod of the head, a guttural grunt, was their only recognition.

I was presented as "the white chief's squaw;" but they gave no sign of pleasure, and I was quite at a loss to know what next to do, when I was informed by the interpreter that they would not recognize me as "the great chief's squaw" unless I could show them some "pappooses;" "for," said he, "the Indians believe that the Great Spirit will never smile upon a house where there are no "pappooses."

Thus informed, the "pappooses" were called, and I armed myself with a child on either side and appeared before them; then, for the first time, they

smiled and saluted me in true Indian fashion, after which they made themselves quite at home, apparently interested in what they saw, but not in the least surprised, as it is contrary to their nature and etiquette to appear surprised at anything.

When they were taken into the dining-room, where a table was spread with the usual dainties provided at an afternoon tea, they behaved with civilized propriety, but with more than civilized appetites. After eating all that was offered, they squatted on the floor, unable to stand the strain longer. It was a time of uncommon novelty and interest; and when some months later we read of scalpings and massacres carried on by our afternoon guests, we were grateful that the length of a continent separated us from the visitors

whom we had entertained in a most peaceful and friendly fashion, never dreaming they might like our scalps to ornament their beaded belts.

IX.

One of the pleasant memories of "The Old Elms" is the *fêtes* of little children which took place there almost every year. The children who had no green grass to play upon and no wild flowers to gather, used to come and revel in the stacks of new-mown hay, and gather buttercups and daisies with as much pleasure as though they had been Jacqueminots and carnations. Hundreds of children have frolicked in the shade of the elms; and the thought that joy and pleasure were put into their cheerless lives even for a day made the trees and the flowers more dear to those who dwell there.

Little sales were held under the trees year after year, in memory of the daughter of the house, who said to her young companions as she was leaving home to travel in Europe: "While we are separated, let us remember each other in working for the Lord's poor. I am tired of *Circles;* we will call ourselves 'The Charity Square.' I will gather things as I travel from place to place, and you can work here, and in the autumn have a fair for the Orphan's Home." Her plans were enthusiastically carried out by her young companions who had worked busily all through the summer months, and her box of treasures came in time for the autumn sale. There was a fine display of dainty work, and pretty trinkets which sold as well for her sake as for the orphans'.

It came about that not far from the time of the little sale she passed from Rome to the "City that hath foundations;" and the last news she received from "The Old Elms" (the place she loved above all earthly spots) was an account of the success of the fair for which she had labored, never for a moment forgetting, wherever she went, to add something to the box which was to be sent home in the autumn to "The Charity Square."

In memory of her, this little sale was repeated year after year under the old elms, until the young girls scattered to make new homes for themselves; and thousands of dollars were added to the treasury of the Orphan's Home.

Just as she was taking her flight from Italy to the Eternal City, a little Italian waif appeared on the even-

ing of the sale (as though sent by Heaven), and asked protection. He was a tiny boy; his great black eyes and his pathetic voice won the hearts of the young girls when he asked to play his fiddle for some supper, and said, "Nobody love me; nobody smile on me." The eyes of the girls filled with tears; and with one voice they begged to take the little waif and give him some supper. I said, "What shall we do with him when the Fair is over?" But the appealing eyes of the child and the pleading voices of the young girls prevailed; and we took him in and placed him upon the flower table, where he was reminded of his own beautiful Italy, the land of flowers; and the notes of his little fiddle attracted the visitors, so that as the evening wore on many friends gathered around him; his pock-

ets were filled with pennies; and his eyes overflowed with joy. But the evening wore away, and the flowers faded, and the people were leaving one by one. What now was to become of the child?

It was decided after much consultation to place him in the Orphan's Home for which the girls were working; and to that Home on the following morning little Dino (for so we called him) was taken. As we entered the pleasant Home, Dino took a deliberate look around the sunny room, and then thrust his little brown chubby hand into the pocket of his trousers, and drew forth the pennies that were snugly tucked away in their depths, his black eyes fairly dancing with joy as he handed them to the superintendent, saying: "You give me home; I

give you my pennies. I was 'fraid I freeze to death." Dino remained in the Home five years, the delight of all the household. He often visited "The Old Elms," and reported from time to time progress in his lessons, and repeated Scripture texts and poetry which he thought would please me.

At length he left the Home and took a place in the country where he could go to school, and earn his own living by doing the chores of a farmer. After some years Dino returned to "The Old Elms" dressed in the garb, and with the manners, of a gentleman. He had secured a situation where he was earning good wages; and he said modestly: "If I had not been cared for as I was, and instructed in that Christian Home, I should be a beggar now, as I was when I entered the Home." Dino

now has a pleasant home of his own, with a wife and children; and he adorns the society in which he moves.

The young girl for whom it was done had gone from Italy beyond our care and keeping; and the little child had come from Italy to claim our love and watchful care.

After it was all over, Dr. S. F. Smith sent the following affectionate tribute:

"Is thy final rest more peaceful,
Is thy sleep more sweet, dear child?
Brought from Rome's gorgeous sepulchres
Back to thy native wild?
Or breathes the wind more gently
Where the chestnut and the pine
Above the tomb that holds thy dust
Their clustering branches twine?

Thy footsteps trod the pathway
Of grand, historic Rome,
Thy gaze admiring rested
On picture, church, and dome.

Why, yearning with a tender love
Did thine eyes look back to see
The elms around thy cherished home
Where thy whole soul longed to be?

. . . . . .

Welcome again, fair sleeper;
Peace to thy precious dust!
Rest calmly with thy kindred
Till the rising of the just.
The winds shall sing above thee
Where the chestnut and the pine
In thy own dear native forests
Their clustering branches twine!"

Winding up the avenue one summer's day was seen a motley group of women and children. They came from the attics and cellars of North Street. Many of them had never seen the country since their childhood, and had never looked at the blue sky except through smoke and dust. Every face told the strange, sad story of empty, hopeless lives, of struggles and fail-

ures, of scanty clothing and insufficient food. There was not one expression of hope or cheer. It was interesting to watch their varied countenances. Some were wildly excited at the sight of green grass and daisies and buttercups, and were almost like caged animals let loose; and others seemed awed into silence, and sitting down under the elms, their sad eyes wandered over the meadows. They looked into the trees, and saw the shimmering leaves and waving branches, and dreamed, perhaps, of their childhood's home, and wondered if anything better than their dark cellars and crowded attics would ever come to them. Many of them said: "If heaven is anything like this, I should like to go there." One, in a desperate tone, exclaimed: "Christ must have put

it into yer head to ask us here; yer never could have thought of it yerself!"

It is difficult for young people of this generation to conceive the excitement that prevailed as the question of the abolition of slavery grew in interest, and penetrated every hamlet. There was not a man or woman who was so ignorant or stupid as not to be moved either one way or the other in this matter. It was discussed in the churches, in the post-office, in the village store, in the farmyards, at the corners of the streets, over the dish-washing in the kitchen; families were separated, and friendships broken; sons were alienated from their fathers, and churches broken up; people on both sides used the most severe language; we were told

by a lecturer that "our communion cloth was dripping with the blood of slaves."

A woman appeared one day who said she wished to see me alone upon very important business. Taking her into a remote corner, and closing every door behind me, she informed me that she had in her house a runaway slave, a young girl, who had escaped from her master, and had been wandering about through forests and fields for many days. Her clothes, she said, were torn in tatters by the brambles and thorns through which she had made her way; her shoes were almost dropping from her feet; her hair was a mass of tangles; and her flesh was so cut and bruised as almost to bring the tears to one's eyes. The woman told me that this poor girl was in such a state of ner-

vous excitement that I could not see her; for she suspected every one, and would burst into tears when a carriage passed in the street, thinking her master was in pursuit of her.

The woman who came to me with this strange story lived in a remote part of the town, in a lonely place, and I suggested that the runaway would be safer with me among more people.

"Oh, no," she replied; "I wish to take her away to-night; and knowing your interest in the slave, I have come to ask you to give me a suit of your husband's clothes that I may dress her in man's attire, and start with her for Canada, where the poor creature will be safe from her pursuers."

Fired with excitement and interest, I did not consider the plausibility of the woman's story; but gathered together a

wardrobe of my husband's best clothing, — coat, trousers, boots, hat, and everything pertaining to a man's wardrobe, — and taking a fast horse which nothing would have induced me to use on any less important occasion, I drove at full speed to the hiding-place of the hunted slave, so that no time might be lost in starting her for Canada, the only place of safety.

Reaching the house where the object of my search was supposed to be secreted, I was told that I could not see her, for she would go into hysterics at the sight of any one. I believed it all; and turning my excited, foam-flecked steed toward home, I must have reached there just about the time my informant, with her husband dressed in a fine suit of clothing provided for the runaway slave, started for Canada to evade the

law which she had trampled upon by hiding stolen goods. But scenes of real flight were not infrequent during the months preceding the war, and we were kept in a state of constant excitement.

Strange footsteps were heard on the piazza one night, just as we were retiring; and upon opening the door we beheld an object so forlorn, ragged, filthy, and black, as scarcely to resemble a human being, — a negro who said he had come for a night's lodging. We told him we would give him money to pay for his lodging at the hotel; that we did not take lodgers. "But," he answered, "they will not let me lodge there; they told me you was an abolitionist, and you would take me." We at once saw the joke, and knew it was being played upon us to test our princi-

ples; so we said, "Come in, friend; we will give you shelter."

There was an encampment of soldiers in Readville, eight or nine miles distant from "The Old Elms;" and a son of one of our neighbors, who had been some time in camp, suddenly died there. He was brought to Newton for burial on a snowy, dismal day, and the soldiers detailed for the funeral had taken that long march through mud and slush; and when they entered the church where the service was held, they were shivering with cold. Nothing had been provided for their refreshment, and they were faint and hungry.

We invited them to go to "The Old Elms;" and a warmer welcome no company ever had there than these hundred tired, foot-sore, bedraggled, mud-be-

spattered soldiers. Everything in the house that could be eaten was brought out; hot coffee was prepared, and blazing fires were lighted on all the hearths; and food was gathered from our neighbors to supplement the lack. Thus warmed and fed, they tramped back to their cheerless tents to await the summons to go to the battle-fields, from which many of them never returned.

A little incident in the experience of the dwellers at "The Old Elms" is looked back upon with interest. It shows the changed condition of the country. Having some business connections with a house in a Southern city, Mr. C—— found it necessary to employ a slave, there being no other service available. When the master of the slave came for the wages of his

"chattel," the poor slave would take to the cellar, and hide behind barrels until his master's departure; and then on his knees, with the tears streaming down his black face, he would beg his employer to buy him.

This went on for a while, until it could be endured no longer; and the poor fellow was bought and given his liberty. When the business at the South was given up, and Mr. C—— came North to live, he was "held up" for the Massachusetts legislature by the so-called Free-soil party. The opposing party — the Whigs — felt that the State would be in peril if the Free-soiler should be elected.

Accordingly on the day of election, horses were driven from one end of the town to the other, until they were white with foam; old men were routed from

their farms and out of their beds; and every one who could cast a vote was dragged to the polls to prevent the dire calamity of having a man elected representative of Massachusetts, who had owned a slave, and called himself a Free-soiler. But the horses ran in vain; and the Free-soil party gained the victory. The State survived the shock; and Jack, the emancipated slave, lived a happy life with a wife and baby all his own.

The memories clustering about "The Old Elms" are for the most part bright and glowing. The shadows only serve to tone the picture down, and give a natural relief. Such, for instance, is the following experience which once attended our annual hejira from the city to the country house.

We always affirmed that we never moved anything; and that particular year, as my husband was in California, we wished to make the moving as easy as possible. When we packed up the few articles that we felt it was essential to take with us, we found that they filled three large express wagons to their utmost capacity.

We covered the furniture, closed the blinds, fastened the windows and doors, and said good-by to the warm and dusty city about one o'clock in the afternoon, and seated ourselves in the carriage, so packed with bundles and band-boxes, pictures and vases, clocks and ornaments, and many little articles which could not be trusted to other hands, that we were reminded of a carriage-load of emigrants *en route* from the wharf to the Western prairies.

Giving the driver many charges to drive in such a way as to keep mirrors from breaking and vases from tipping; and be sure not to bear against the picture which had been placed behind his back for safety; and by no means to lose the basket which had been placed at his feet; and to avoid the stones in driving, so as not to disarrange the bandboxes inside; we drew a long breath of relief, and started on our way.

After a few moments I was sufficiently composed to fall into a pleasant reverie: Oh! what a delicious rest awaits me in that quiet country home, where the grass is waving, and the birds are singing their sweetest spring songs, and chirping their little housekeeping affairs so lovingly that the very sound of their music will lull

me to sleep more sweet and restful than I have known for months in the noisy city!

Thus we dreamed till the horses trotted into the familiar avenue, and we turned our tired eyes for the anticipated rest — when, lo and behold! the green lawn of which we had been fondly dreaming was entirely overflowed with the swollen brook, and where we looked for greenness we beheld something more like the parade-ground of a herd of swine.

My heart sank within me. I called the farmer, and asked the cause of all this, and was informed that the late heavy rains had caused the brook to overflow, and that when the water had evaporated it would look better. I replied: —

"I cannot wait for this process; but

I wish you to start immediately and engage every man you can find, and every cart and horse in the village, and use them till enough gravel and loam have been drawn to fill the low ground beyond all contingencies of storm and rain, and then have the whole turfed."

"But," said the farmer, "that would take a great deal of time, and more than an acre of turf, besides being a very great expense."

I replied: "If it takes all the men in town, and all the gravel and loam off all the hills, and all the time till doomsday, and all the money we possess, it must be done now."

Accordingly, the next morning a line of carts and horses were seen wending their unhurried way to the scene of my disappointment. In my heart I spurred

them on with sharper spurs than ever gallant rider used upon his steed, but to little purpose. A glance upon the upper lawn betrayed to me the fact that the prolonged cold weather had so far kept back vegetation that there was scarcely an appearance of greenness anywhere. The grass was yet quite brown. In order to stimulate the growth, I told the gardener to use some patent fertilizer which my husband had purchased of a travelling pedler whose business it was to deceive the very elect; accordingly, the workmen were sent to sprinkle the dust over the reluctant grass. After urging each individual spear to do its best, and finding it heeded neither my words nor the patent fertilizer, I inquired the cause, and was told that wherever the wonderful patent fertilizer had touched,

it had burned to brownness the struggling grass.

Just here I took a long breath, and in time to listen to the call, "What are we to do, mum? The hydraulics is out of order, and the cistern is nearly empty. There is no water in the stable. The plants are suffering in the greenhouse. The boiler is likely to explode in the house. What is to be done?"

"Go at once for the plumbers," I said, "and have the rams attended to."

The plumbers arrive, — one to work, the other to look on; and after two days of investigation it was ascertained that nobody knew what was the matter, and we had to be supplied with water by carting it from a neighboring brook. The laundress, on being told that she must be very careful of the water, re-

plied: "Indeed, mum, I have not used a quart of water for all me washing to-day, and shure."

As the shades of evening gathered round us, we thought for a little season to forget the outdoor troubles. We ordered the gas lighted; and with a sigh of relief took up the evening paper to read the news of the day, when all at once the gas began to dance up and down with a jerk and a twitch which made reading quite impossible.

Only one resort was left to me; and I retired to my sleeping apartment to seek repose for the night. Upon opening the door, such an odor met my nasal organs that I was obliged to retreat forthwith. At dawn of day a messenger was despatched post-haste for a gas-man, that the gas-pipes might be overhauled; and for a carpenter to

investigate the nauseous odor in my room. The difficulty was so deep-seated that it was found necessary to have the floor removed. Then a mason had to be sent for to remove the plastering, and a furnace-man to take down the flue which came in the way.

Three separate times this pleasant little operation was performed before the cause of offence was discovered in the form of a huge rat, who had chosen that quiet retreat back of my closet wall to breathe out his life sweetly there; sweet, I trust, to him, but, alas! anything but sweet to me. When this was over, the stableman came, with a woe-begone expression, saying, "One of the horses is lame, mum. What is to be done?"

"Go at once," I said, "for the horse-doctor."

This important personage arrived; and after a long and learned discourse upon the nature of horse diseases in general, and of the lame foot in question, told me that a carpenter must prepare a box for the horse to stand in. Again the carpenter was sent for, and the necessary box prepared; and, as I was obliged to visit the horse somewhat frequently to see that the treatment was properly administered, I discovered that the stable and outbuildings were in a condition more befitting a drunken frontiersman than a respectable gentleman's country-seat. I stationed myself at the stable door, and delivered an oration, the purport of which was that those cobwebs must be removed, that rubbish disposed of, and the stable and yard made decent at once.

A day or two later I discovered that my orders had not been heeded; and I took my stand in the barnyard, and gave my personal attention to the removal of the cobwebs and the rubbish in general. This done, it seemed necessary that the house and outbuilding should be painted. Six men were employed two weeks in this operation; and when it was within two days of completion the painters proposed to take a little vacation, in reply to which proposition I calmly remarked: "You will finish the work now, or take your leave, never to return."

After about three weeks the lawn and the water, the rams and the gas-pipes, the stables and the outhouses, the flower-houses and the graperies, the cows and the horses, the painters and the carpenters, the masons and

the farmers, the gardeners and the laborers, the coachman and his assistant, were all in running order, except that the horses were suffering for want of use. And on a fine June evening I thought I would take a little drive for the purpose of exercising one of them.

As I was driving down the mill hill, with a strange driver, the dancing, prancing animal slipped off his whole headdress, bridle, halter, and all; and by a far more rapid movement than usual, I found myself walking double-quick time toward home, leaving the man and horse to follow the best they could. Indeed, I was only too thankful to escape with whole bones.

By this time summer guests were expected; and, wishing my place to present a pleasant appearance, I ordered

the walks and paths put in order, and the trimming-scissors and lawn-mowers used about the borders and around the little ponds. As I looked from my window to see if the work was properly done, I discovered the water of the pond in front of the house, which is usually clear as glass, entirely covered with what appeared like a green, slimy substance. I summoned the gardener, and asked for an explanation.

"I sent a man," he said, "to trim the short grass, mum, who was unaccustomed to the work, and it all went onto the water."

"Very well," I replied, calmly to all appearance, but full of smothered wrath, "send the same man to skim the pond until every spear of grass has been removed."

I had set my heart upon offering some very nice Jersey butter of home make to my guests. I sat down to the table with a complacent air, and offered my butter, which was pleasing enough to the eye, but, alas! as bitter as gall to the taste; and the Jersey cream, of which I had boasted, curdled when I poured the coffee upon it, as did my blood at the sight of it. Thus ended the first month of my country rest.

The years that have gone with lightest touch over the elms have weighed heavily upon many of those who were accustomed to gather beneath them; and, one by one, how large a number of these have passed to the land unseen! Yet wherever I am, I have only to close my eyes to hear again the murmur of

winds, and the songs of birds among their boughs; and to see once more on the cool piazzas they overspread, or in the winding walks under their shade, the faces and forms of the friends I was wont to welcome there, or of the occasional guests whose visits lent brightness to the days. With the trees are linked hallowed associations, the joys of friendship, the charm of social intercourse; and while life lasts these blended memories will be ineffaceable and dear.

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